

# THE MORNING NEWS

Your Source for local news in English Caya G.F. Betico Croes 111 T. 588-9517 F. 5889518.

## Police announces change of Carnival Parade Route; well prepared for Aruba's 60th Carnival



Route of San Nicolas Grand Carnival Parade



Irma Gordon

ORANJESTAD -- The Police Corps along with SAC has announced that at least three Carnival parades will have

some adaptation in their route. The Police spokesman, Lito Lacle, has announced that this year again the rule "Faya Bo Haya," (mess up and you will suffer the consequences) will be in force. Thus rule will be in force from January 3rd until the very end of the Carnival season, March 4th, at the burning of the Momo.

They have instituted the "Faya Bo Haya" rule to guarantee the security of each citizen and visitor, as well as to intercept whatever danger. The Police will issue more information regarding this rule.

The Police spokesman reminds all groups, leaders of groups, as well as leaders of musical bands with trailers or vehicles or whatever type of object on four wheels, including bars, toilets, etc, that these must be checked and inspected by the Police Force.

This is to ensure that the chassis and other parts of these trailers are in order and that they are not a danger or disturbance during the Carnival parade.

Continued on page 2

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## Socialite heiress stabbed to death, police arrest suspect



Nedenia Post Dye

ROATAN -- Socialite heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post has been dead for 40 years, and now her great grand-daughter Nedenia Post Dye has been found stabbed to death on a Caribbean island.

The American heiress was believed to have been slain by a local singer named Lenin Roberto Arana, who Fox News reports was trying to kick a drug addiction habit with her help.

The police chief in Roatan, Honduras says that Post's grand-daughter "was a good woman" and she often worked with those at risk. The suspect is telling reporters he is innocent and that he and the 46-year-old heiress Dye were involved romantically.

With multiple knife

wounds to the back of the victim, and the suspect found with blood all over his clothing as he attempted to flee in her car, police have arrested Arana and are holding him for the murder of Marjorie Merriweather Post's great grand-daughter Nedenia.

Nedenia Post Dye may have spent 15 years living on an island where beautiful beaches, luxury resorts and vacation homes populated the area, but she is one heiress who appears to have tried to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate. And she possibly paid for her own as a result, unfortunately. And that might, unfortunately, dissuade others with wealth from doing the same thing.



The suspect in the murder, Lenin Roberto Arana, who also goes with the stage name Canario



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## Police announces change of Carnival Parade Route...

Continued from page 1

The children's parade in Oranjestad will follow the following route: Guillermo Trinidad Stadium – Avenida Milio Croes – Vondellaan – LG Smith Boulevard – Adriaan Lacle Boulevard – Avenida Milio Croes – Stadium Guillermo Trinidad.

This means that the Oranjestad children's parade will NOT follow the LG Smith Boulevard up to the former DOW, instead they will turn on Adriaan Lacle Boulevard and head to the Stadium.

The grand San Nicolas parade, to take place on March

1st will follow the following route: Joe Laveist Sport Park – Caya Dick Cooper – Caya Captain Rodgers – Lagoweg – Bernhardstraat – Dr. Schaepmanstraat – Weg Fontein – Pastoor Hendrikstraat – Joe Laveist Sport Park.

They have made this route somewhat longer to avoid that the head of the parade connects with the tail, this will allow for more space for everyone on the route to enjoy the parade.

With respect to the grand Oranjestad parade, the route has been made somewhat

longer. Lacle indicated that the parade will begin at Avenida Milio Croes, but at Hagemeyer and the parade does not stop but continues on further than the DOW. The routes of other parades have not been changed.

Commissioner Irma Gordon indicated that they have instituted changes in the Carnival parade in San Nicolas in order to accommodate the large number of people that will be on foot celebrating our grand cultural festival. They expect a large crowd along the street as well numerous groups participating in the Grand Parade. There will be groups from Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Curacao, the Netherlands, Surinam and Venezuela.

In preparation for Carnival 60, the Police Force together with SAC has indicated that this Carnival season will be rather long. The preparation from the Police Force has begun in earnest and they have personnel in place for this busy period.

As of the first event to take place in San Nicolas, the "Jumble Jump In," scheduled for January 4th, they will close off certain streets. The streets to be closed off will be announced at a later time. The place where the event will take place, the bus station, is somewhat closed off which will allow people to enjoy the event freely.

The Police Force and SAC will be working together during the Carnival season in order to ensure that everyone, including our valuable visitors are informed about changes, the closure of roads and changes in routes. They want everything to run smoothly and without incident or accidents.

## Bridge sessions Aloha Bridge Club Aruba

ORANJESTAD -- Just to inform all bridge players that Aloha Bridge Club Aruba is going to start with the weekly bridge sessions for next year on Thursday January 2nd 2014.

The board would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year and is looking forward to welcome all participants on our first meeting in the new year.

Aloha Bridge Club meets twice a week: on Thursday mornings at the Members Lounge of the Aruba Beach Club Resort, starting at 9.00 am and on Friday evenings at



the Frank Conway Room of Casa del Mar, starting at 7.30 pm. Fee for guest players \$ 6.00 or Afl. 10.00 per person. The club can also be of assistance in finding single players a bridge partner. Please call Addy Eilers, tel.: 582-4953. Signing up closes ten minutes before starting time.

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## Editorial



It's that time of the year when we are joyful and happy! We rejoice because Christmas is a time for rejoicing. But Christmas has come and gone; we recall that Jesus was the real reason for Christmas and we recognized His saving message to the world in His birth some 2013 years ago.

As we journey through the rest of the jubilant season, we stop long enough to welcome only blessing and happiness for these last days of 2013. We pray that these last days will bring us a wonderful closure of 2013 void of accidents or incidents of pain and sadness.

As citizens we must be cautious to drive soberly and to behave conscientiously, respecting others on the road and in our homes. If we drink, we will not drive, and if we choose to drive we will not drink. We want to close 2013 alive and well...with our family and friends.

Someone once said, it is not so important how we begin, what's more important is how we end...let's end 2013 positively with the anticipation to a jubilant beginning of 2014!

## Nutzbeatz of Aruba shines at "Mysteryland" in Chile



ORANJESTAD -- Last week the long awaited event "Mysteryland" in Chile took place. From Aruba, the well known Eldrick Boekhoudt, aka "Nutzbeatz" also did a presentation which was simply fantastic.

"Mysterland" took place on Friday 20th and Sunday 22nd of December, at Picaquin in Chile. This is a large camping site where 70 thousand fans can attend, camping and enjoying the weekend.

The public enjoyed a variety of music. Nutzbeatz did his presentation on Saturday December 21st together with "Dirty Dutch." They included such giants as DJ Chuckie, Mitchel Niemeyer, Deorro, Betatraxx, Hijo and Nutzbeatz.

According to Nutzbeatz, they received a lot of praise. It is quiet an honor to present before an audience of over 5 thousand people. With that presentation, Nutzbeatz opens

another door of opportunity, which is Central America. Obviously, the name of Aruba

was mentioned frequently during the entire event

*Continued on page 5*

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**FRIDAY CARIBBEAN PAN NIGHT**  
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## Keep your hat on! MooMba's Annual 'Nieuwjaarsduik' will plunge you into a great New Year



ORANJESTAD -- It's already in everyone's diaries: MooMba's Annual New Year's Plunge to start the new year off with a refreshing dip into the ocean. Hundreds of late, late party-goers and lots of other fun people will be there in bathing attire, but with their hats on. At noon sharp the count-down is at zero and everyone will run across the

beach into the balmy water. No freezing temperatures, shivering bodies or shattering teeth hurting from the cold here: this is your chance to join and boast about it afterwards. Join the fun and the thousands upon thousands others who are doing the same all over the world, but then in conditions one would not enjoy at all!

This fourth MooMba Unox

Nieuwjaarsduik has an added benefit: not only do you get rid of any hangover you might have from partying till early morning on the 31st, you get a bowl of erwtensoep (pea soup) with sausage afterwards. This Dutch traditional pea soup will heat you up after your plunge and it will have you in terrific shape for more partying in no time flat.

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## Photographing Fireworks

ORANJESTAD -- Veteran visitors are well aware that tomorrow night will be one long display of pyrotechnics, from sundown until after midnight. Photography enthusiasts with a quality DSLR have the opportunity to acquire some remarkable photos that will surely elicit



Many cameras have a fireworks preset

"Ooooooh's! and Ahhhh's!" from envious friends. Properly captured, fireworks can produce some of the most exciting, evocative images in your collection.

The quality of present day point and shoot cameras and even those on a select few cell phones, can result in enviable shots, but they can never quite equal what can be accomplished with a proper digital single-lens reflex camera (DSLR). If you seriously wish to capture most-if not all-of the shell's trajectory, the crowning explosion, and the glowing detritus drifting to earth, it will best be done with these more versatile cameras.

Point and shoot cameras, and some DSLR's like Olympus brand, have a few "creative settings" that already pre-set what is considered ideal aperture, ISO, and shutter speed for capturing fireworks, and are usually labeled as such. These set the size of the lens opening, the sensitivity to light and the how fast the camera will take the picture.

For a full capture of a firework, a slower shutter speed is required, which will produce those dramatic light trails. Slower shutter speeds mean images are more prone to blurring due to hand shake, which is almost impossible to avoid without the camera stabilized by being mounted on a tripod. If you didn't happen to pack your tripod for your trip, you will find a bag of rice found at the local supermarkets will prove an excellent substitute, and can be stationed on a variety of surfaces.

It is also advised to set a delayed shutter release, as would be used when trying to inset yourself in a shot after having



depressed the shutter button. Most cameras have a 2-second and 12-second delayed shutter release, which will reduce the vibration from pressing down the shutter button by hand. Be sure to turn off the flash.

One of the great advantages of DSLR cameras when photographing fireworks, is they can be fitted with a superior telephoto lens. The optical zoom on small, fixed lens cameras and phones can never match up to the quality of image produced by a telephoto lens.

### Manual Settings:

1. First, ensure the image stabilization/vibration reduction function on the lens is disabled when your camera is on the tripod. Some lenses will try to compensate for vibration when there isn't any and ruin your shots. This will be found on the lens, or in your camera's menu.

2. Ensure you are shooting in the highest quality resolution possible, or RAW setting. Set your white balance to automatic. If you have time, try switching your white balance to see if the results appeal to you. Try to remember what you are using, or take notes, so you are prepared for the next time.

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## Fireworks

Continued from page 4

3. Next, set your ISO to 100 or lower, this will ensure rich colors and deepen the dark sky for better contrast.

4. Set your shutter speed to six seconds. Some folks like to use 'bulb', which keeps the shutter open, but then you must manually close the shutter when the shot is done, and you will likely sacrifice consistency. Check your first few shots and adjust the speed to suit your personal preference.

5. Set your aperture to f/11. This is subject to change depending, again, on your preference. But six seconds at f/11 is a tried and true formula to get you started in photographing fireworks.

There will be many interesting places on Aruba for capturing fireworks, and those staying in the higher floors of island resorts have an excellent vantage point. The heights of the water tower in Alto Vista is also ideal. From these locations you can reproduce the hundreds of lights in the sky from local families and businesses setting off smaller roman candles through the night, and you will see some quite impressive rockets. In this case, a wide-angle lens will produce more desirable images.

Many of the resorts set up a platform over the water and conduct a professional display for their guests. Inquire with your concierge if your resort will be doing so, which will offer an ideal opportunity for some excellent photos.

Traditionally, one of the most exciting displays on December 31/January 1, is that sponsored by the Renaissance Resort. It is conducted over the harbor in Oranjestad. Catching the actual explosions and the reflections in the calm water is always an eye pleaser. Some buildings in the foreground or background add depth and dimension to your shots. Another interesting touch is to have a few peoples' silhouettes in the foreground. The Oranjestad show usually begins on the stroke of midnight, to welcome the new year.

Also at midnight, Divi Resorts will be setting off a professional display from a barge located offshore at that stretch of beach between the Tamarijn and Divi resorts, across from the Divi/Dutch Village. All are welcome to enjoy.

New Year's Eve on Aruba is a thrilling, noisy event, which will provide ample opportunities to record fantastic fireworks photos, done correctly, these are shots you will show off proudly!

Rosalie Klein



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## Nutzbeatz of Aruba shines at "Mysteryland"

Continued from page 3

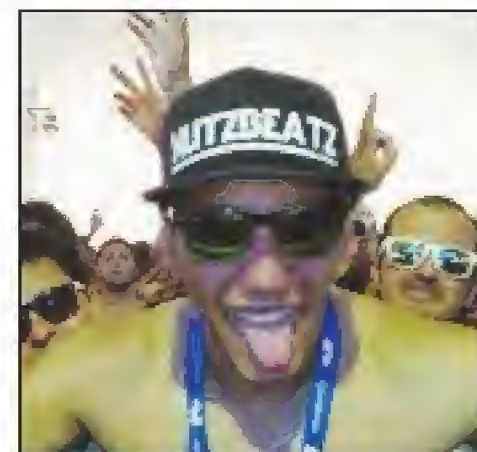
Eldrick Boekhoudt was born on Aruba, grew up here and became the greatest DJ of electronic music in the Dutch Caribbean. He has done several presentations in Latin America (especially in Venezuela), in the US and even in Holland.

In 2013 he signed a contract with Dirty Dutch and is now an integral part of that group,

doing presentations in the Latin American region. He has played with great DJ's like DJ Chuckie, Summery James, Ryan Marciano, Nero, Erick Morillo, Hardwell, Fatboy Slim, Dimitri Vegas, Sidney Samson, Afrojack, Shermanology, Nicky Romero and we can go on mention more of the greats.

Eldrick Boekhoudt is receiving

support from the Aruba Airport Authority N.V., Minister of Tourism Otmar Oduber, Local Store, Monster Energy Drink, Aruba Bank, Cuchkie, Dirty Dutch and I Love Muzika. They have all contributed to Aruba receiving great exposure during "Mysteryland's" presentation. This is a new and important market for Aruba's tourism.







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## Israel set for new prisoner release as Kerry heads back to region

JERUSALEM (AFP) - Israel prepared yesterday to free 26 Palestinian prisoners under peace talks brokered by US Secretary of State John Kerry, who is returning to the region to boost the faltering negotiations.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had agreed to the phased release of 104 Palestinian prisoners in line with commitments to the US-backed talks, which resumed in July, and previous batches were freed in August and October.

The release of the third tranche of 26 prisoners "should come on tonight after the 48-hour delay given for appeals from victims' families to the supreme court," an official in Netanyahu's office told AFP.

In the past, the supreme court has turned down all appeals against the release of

Palestinian prisoners.

Netanyahu's government gave the green light on Saturday for the latest release.

In Israel, members of bereaved families did not hide their dismay and anger. Dozens have been protesting the impending release outside Netanyahu's Jerusalem residence since Wednesday, with police arresting two people who tried to block roads at the entrance to the city in protest.

Israeli media reports suggested that Netanyahu was likely today to unveil plans to build an additional 1,400 housing units, on top of those already announced, following strong pressure from ultra-nationalist members of his governing coalition despite US and EU appeals to desist from making such announcements.



**IRAQ, Arbil : A Syrian-Kurdish refugee man dressed in Santa Claus carries a child during Christmas celebrations in the Quru Gusik (Kawergosk) refugee camp, 20 kilometers east of Arbil, the capital of the autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq, on December 29, 2013. The fighting in Syria pushed tens of thousands of Syrian Kurds across the border into Iraqi Kurdistan, which the United Nations says now hosts more than 203,000 Syrian refugees, the vast majority of those in Iraq. (AFP PHOTO)**



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## Peace efforts flounder in S.Sudan, further attacks feared

JUBA (AFP) - International efforts to bring peace to strife-torn South Sudan appeared at an impasse yesterday as the government accused former vice president Riek Machar of recruiting tens of thousands of young fighters.

Juba claimed that Machar, the de facto leader of rebels fighting the government, has recruited up to 25,000 young men from his Nuer tribe in the eastern state of Jonglei who they say are "ready to attack any time".

According to Jonglei's acting governor Ogato Chan, the Nuer fighters were around 110 kilometers (70 miles) from the state capital of Bor, which was now under the control of government forces.

"The information is that they want to come and attack Bor but I am sure they will not attempt to do it because the SPLA (Sudanese army) forces

will repel them back," Chan said. "Now the army are taking position."

Rebel spokesman Moses Ruai Lat said Machar was "not mobilising his tribe", the second biggest ethnic group in South Sudan, describing the men instead as regular soldiers who had rejected the government and were not specifically drafted by Machar.

The Nuer fighters are members of a tribal militia known as the "White Army", a name synonymous with years of violence and terror during the 1990s civil war.

In 2011 and 2012 the White Army turned on the Murie ethnic group, killing hundreds in a conflict over cattle theft.

The accusations have cast a shadow over peace talks spearheaded by regional leaders to end the bloody violence believed to have killed thousands and which the international

community fears could slide into civil war.

Regional leaders at the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have set Tuesday as a deadline for face-to-face talks between President Salva Kiir and his former deputy to end the fierce battles for control over several strategic oil-producing areas notably in the north of South Sudan.

While the government has said it was willing to observe a ceasefire, Machar has made demands including the release of his arrested political allies before committing to a truce.

South Sudanese government spokesman Michael Makuei told AFP Sunday: "I really doubt if we, the South Sudanese government, will be in a position to sit with Riek Machar... He has not even respected the call by IGAD and the African Union to agree to the cessation of hostilities."



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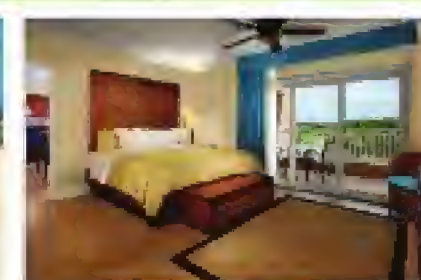
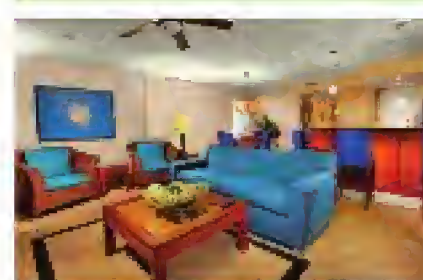
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## Female suicide bomber kills 16 at Russia train station

MOSCOW (AFP) - A female suicide bomber killed at least 16 people Sunday in an attack on the main train station of the southern Russian city of Volgograd, heightening security fears just six weeks before the Sochi Olympic Games.

Investigators said the unidentified woman set off her charge after being stopped by a police officer at the metal detectors of the central entrance to the station when it was packed with people travelling to celebrate the New Year.

Footage captured by a nearby camera showed a huge orange fireball blow out the heavy front doors and windows from the grey stone three-storey building. Thick billows of smoke then poured out as people scattered along the rain-soaked street.

Russia's Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin said officials had launched an inquiry into a suspected "act of terror". It was the deadliest attack in Russia in almost three years.

"A suicide bomber who was approaching a metal detector



saw a law enforcement official and, after growing nervous, set off an explosive device," Markin said in televised comments.

Doctors and police said 16 people were killed and nearly 45 injured by the explosive equivalent of more than 10 kilograms (16 pounds) of TNT.

Russia's interior ministry said it was immediately stepping up security at all the nation's main train stations and airports.

"These measures involve a

greater police presence and more detailed passenger checks," an interior ministry spokesman told the Interfax news agency.

The Volgograd government also introduced a heightened terror alert level in the region for the coming two weeks.

The lifenews.ru website published a picture of what it said was the head of the young female bomber lying amid a pile of debris with her long brown hair spread across the floor.

The website and state-run RIA Novosti identified the bomber as a Dagestani woman named Oksana Aslanova who had been married to two different Islamists killed in battles with federal forces.

Investigators added that she may have been assisted in her attack by a man they identified only by the last name of Pavlov.

Female suicide bombers are often referred to in Russia as "black widows" -- women who seek to avenge the deaths of their family members in the fighting by targeting Russian civilians.

### Olympic security fears

The city, known as Stalin-grad in the Soviet era, was already attacked on October 21 by a female suicide bomber with links to Islamists.

That strike killed six people aboard a crowded bus and prompted the authorities to re-focus their attention on the security measures being taken ahead of the February 7-23 Winter Games in Sochi.

The Black Sea city lies 690

kilometres (425 miles) southwest of Volgograd and in proximity to the violence in North Caucasus regions such as Dagestan and Chechnya.

Militants are seeking to impose an Islamist state throughout Russia's North Caucasus. Their leader Dokka Umarov has ordered rebels to target civilians outside the region and disrupt the Games.

Russian authorities have repeatedly vowed to take the highest security precautions in Sochi. There have been no indications to date of foreign sports fans cancelling their attendance out of safety fears.

Militant strikes have become part of daily life in the mainly Muslim North Caucasus. But the Volgograd blast will be a particular concern to the authorities as the bomber struck a city of more than one million people in the Russian heartland.

Sunday's blast was the deadliest in Russia since a suicide bombing at Moscow's Domodedovo airport killed 37 people in January 2011.





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## Huge crowds hold Madrid mass after new abortion law



MADRID (AFP) - Tens of thousands of Roman Catholics joined in an open-air mass in central Madrid on Sunday to celebrate the Holy Family, just days after the Spanish government agreed to tighten the abortion law.

As large crowds of believers packed the central Plaza de Colon square, many of them urged the government to go even further and implement an outright abortion ban without exceptions.

Under pressure from the Church, Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's conservative government announced on December 20 it would roll back a 2010 law that had allowed women to opt freely for abortion in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy.

The new law, yet to pass parliament where the ruling Popular Party enjoys an absolute majority, would allow abortion only in cases of rape or a threat to the physical or psychological health of the mother.

Elena Valenciano, deputy head of the opposition Socialist Party, said the Madrid archbishop had been the first to congratulate the government on its new abortion legislation.

During the 2004-2011 rule of previous prime minister Jose Luis Zapatero, hundreds of thousands of believers attended the annual mass, many of them outraged by his Socialist government's legalisation of gay marriage in 2005 and the abortion reform of 2010.



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## Acqua Condominium Aruba announces that construction has been progressing at a brisk pace

The East Tower, overlooking Palm Beach boasts 208 condos, spread over 14 floors. The two top building floors embrace 16 penthouse apartments with majestic views. The building is simply awaiting the windows and a few finishing touches, to conclude construction, very possibly by the end of this year. Following the completion of the elegant club house, the tropical landscaped pool and the spacious parking lots, the condos will be delivered to their proud new owners. Ground has been cleared for the North Tower, which will follow as soon as the East Tower is completed.

A spokesperson for Acqua Condo Aruba reports that the project is receiving tremendous attention, particularly for the winter months. Snow-birds longing to reside in a vacation home on Aruba are now able to visualize this dream coming true, in a manner that leaves them utterly care free when not in residence.

Making the decision to purchase and acting on it quickly, was recently made even more imperative. In November of 2010, the island government of Aruba reiterated its commitment to a building moratorium for the next 10 years, making Acqua Condominium a truly unique investment opportunity,



as it is the one and only high-rise condo project, on property land, in the island's most-desired location.

In view of the moratorium news, and the project's lucrative position, developers were compelled to discontinue the pre-construction discounts. Nevertheless, other purchase incentives have introduced. Special discount offers in effect at present are:

Pay 30% down payment and get 10% discount, 50% down payment, get 15% discount, pay in full for a 25% discount. Prices start at \$ 296,800 for a 2-bedroom/2 bathroom apartment. Paying cash will allow the buyer to obtain this very same unit for only \$ 222,600 - remarkable savings!

Other incentives include: The opportunity to profit from your purchase is also available to buyers when they place their unit in a rental pool.

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The sales center is open Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. nonstop, and Saturday and Sunday, from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. You are invited to meet the sales team who will guide you through the purchase of the stylish condo of your dreams, allowing you to return to Aruba as often as you wish.

You will find the website very helpful. Take a virtual tour and garner info regarding all legal documents, floor plans, furnishings and finishings at: [www.acquaruba.com](http://www.acquaruba.com)

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## NSA spying on Europe- Asia undersea telecom cables

BERLIN (AFP) - The US National Security Agency has collected sensitive data on key telecommunications cables between Europe, north Africa and Asia, German news magazine Der Spiegel reported Sunday citing classified documents.

Spiegel quoted NSA papers dating from February and labelled "top secret" and "not for foreigners" describing the agency's success in spying on the so-called Sea-Me-We 4 undersea cable system.

The massive bundle of fibre optic cables originates near the southern French city of Marseille and links Europe with north Africa and the Gulf states, continuing through Pakistan and India to Malaysia and Thailand.

It said NSA specialists had hacked an internal website belonging to the operator consortium to mine documents about technical infrastructure including circuit mapping and network management information.

Der Spiegel has over the last several months reported on mass NSA spying on targets in the United States and abroad using documents provided by fugitive intelligence contractor Edward Snowden.

A White House-picked panel this month recommended curbing the secretive powers of the NSA, warning that its spying sweeps in the "war on terror" had gone too far.

US President Barack Obama plans to address the report in January.

## Anxious wait for stranded Antarctic ship

SYDNEY (AFP) - Passengers on a Russian research ship trapped in thick Antarctic ice faced an uncertain wait Sunday for one last icebreaking attempt with no guarantees of success.

The MV Akademik Shokalskiy has been marooned by heavy ice since Tuesday about 100 nautical miles east of the French Antarctic base Dumont d'Urville, with two icebreaking ships so far failing in attempts to reach it.

China's Snow Dragon came tantalisingly close on Saturday,

getting to within six-and-a-half nautical miles of the passenger vessel carrying 74 scientists, tourists and crew before impenetrable ice forced it to turn back.

The Australian government's resupply ship Aurora Australis is now en route to make one final bid to free the icebound boat.

"If the Aurora Australis is not capable of getting through the ice, then we will look at utilising the helicopter on board the Chinese-flagged vessel (the Snow Dragon)

which AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) has tasked to remain in the vicinity," the Australian Maritime Safety Authority told AFP.

The Snow Dragon's helicopter did a reconnaissance flight over the site on Sunday afternoon to determine the best approach route for the Australian icebreaker and returned with promising news.

Those on board the ship also reported an easing in the ice, with BBC journalist Andrew Luck-Baker describing "big cracks appearing way towards

the horizon".

The Aurora Australis has the highest icebreaking rate of the three vessels initially sent to the Akademik's rescue, which also included France's L'Astrolabe, but there is no guarantee it will be able to reach the Russian ship.

The Australian icebreaker can cut ice up to 1.6 metres thick but the Akademik is estimated to be surrounded by ice of between three and four metres.

Despite the uncertainty of their plight the ship's passengers were reported to be safe,

well and in good spirits, passing their time by playing board games, watching films and taking walks on the ice to photograph passing penguins.

The group, which includes Australians, Britons and New Zealanders, became stuck when unexpected weather forced their ship into heavy ice. An intense blizzard appears to have increased the buildup of ice around them.

They have been on board for three weeks and had intended to return to New Zealand by early January.





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## White House says ObamaCare sign-ups passed 1 million mark

WASHINGTON -- The Obama administration announced early yesterday that enrollment in the federal healthcare exchange passed the 1 million mark in December as more than 975,000 people signed up between December 1 and the December 24 deadline to ensure coverage beginning on the first of 2014.

Officially, the administration put the total of people now enrolled at more than 1.1 million people now enrolled and boasted that the site was able to support 83,000 concurrent visitors on December 23, the next-to-last day before the sign-up deadline. By contrast, the administration reported only 27,000 sign-ups in October -- the website's first, error-prone month -- and 137,000 in November.

The administration has yet



to provide a December update on the 14 states running their own exchanges. While California, New York, Washington,

Kentucky and Connecticut have performed well, others are still struggling.

## Southern Italy lost 600,000 jobs since start of recession

ROME, -- Italy's economic crisis has caused the country's southern region to lose about 600,000 jobs and \$60 billion from its gross domestic product. The figures on southern

Italy's economy were released by the industrial employers' association Confindustria on the weekend, Italy's ANSA news agency reported.

The decline in the region's

GDP has slowed and business is starting to show signs of recovery, Confindustria said.

Nationally, Italy's GDP remained constant this year after two years of negative growth, data from the national statistics office Istat indicated.



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## Carl Icahn and Apple may head for a major showdown

NEW YORK -- Activist Investor Carl Icahn and technology major Apple are looking forward to the most important confrontation in the recent history of the company. The company is urging its shareholders to vote in opposition to the investor activist's tender for activist investor Carl Icahn and technology major Apple are looking forward to the most important confrontation in the recent history of the company. The company is urging its shareholders to vote in opposition to the investor activist's tender for consigning a minimum of \$50 billion worth of share buyback. Apple stock has been battered in the stock markets in year 2013, despite the company registering good sales numbers for iPhone and iPad.

The proposal has been made by High River Limited Partnership and Icahn Partners. It will be put to vote at the company's annual shareholder meeting. The meeting is planned to take place February 28 next year.

Apple told the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in a filing, "The shareholders hereby approve, on an advisory basis, High River's proposal that Apple commit to completing not less than \$50 billion of share repurchases during Apple's fiscal year ending September 27, 2014".

In March 2013, the company declared a quarterly payment and share repurchase programme. The total cost of quarterly payment and share repurchase programme is \$45 billion.

In April this year, the Board increased the size of the programme to \$100 billion. The share buyback authorization

increased to \$60 billion. As per the Board, it has performed 'aggressively' against the capital return program, thereby spending \$23 billion of the \$60 billion share repurchase authorization in financial year 2013.

Apple did not specify how much it plans to spend in purchasing back shares in financial year 2014. Apple stock closed marginally lower on Friday at \$560.

The stock has touched 52-week low of \$385 and high of \$575.

## Top French court approves 75% company tax on high salaries

PARIS (AFP) - France's top court Sunday approved a proposal for companies to pay 75 percent tax on annual salaries exceeding one million euros in line with President Francois Hollande's drive to limit executive pay at a time of economic hardship.

The Constitutional Council had earlier in the year thrown out one of Hollande's key campaign pledges to impose a 75 percent tax on individuals earning more than one million euros (\$1.35 million).

After that setback, Hollande in March mooted a proposal to make companies pay the tax on salaries exceeding this limit. It will be imposed on salaries paid in 2013 and 2014.

According to the French government, this tax will affect some 470 companies and enterprises and about 1,000 people.

**SATURDAY'S Crossword Answer**

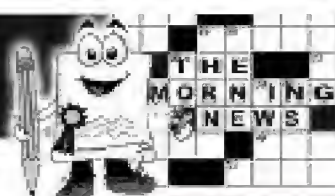
S	I	T	E	S		S	P	Y
O	L	I	V	E	R	S	I	R
R	O	M	A	N	O	O	X	E
E	V	E		T	A	R	O	T
R	E	D	S		S	E	T	H
				W	I	T	C	H
	C	L	I	M	B		E	B
	H	O	P	P	E	R	A	R
D	A	V	E		E	A	T	S
D	I	E	S		F	I	R	I
E	R	R			D	A	N	E



## COMICS



## CROSSWORD



## CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

- 1 Low voice  
5 Not narrow  
9 Basic food  
11 Gershwin and Levin  
12 Maybelline rival  
13 IX  
14 Hockey great Bobby  
15 Mother — (saintly nun)  
17 Couple  
19 Bro's sib  
20 Trans-parent  
22 Damon et al.  
26 Egg drink  
28 Butcher's offering  
29 Recording studio controls  
32 "Me," to Miss Piggy  
33 Brownish purple  
34 Frozen pendant  
36 German "mister"  
37 Tycoon

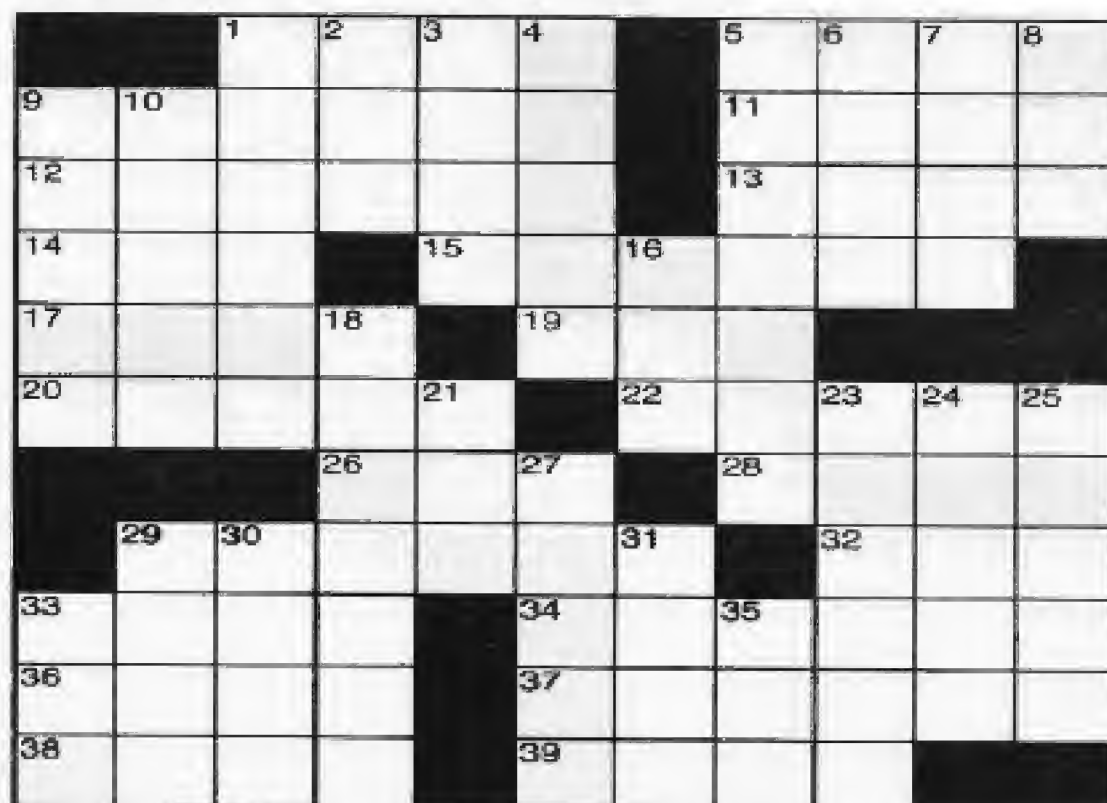
## Trump

- 38 French islands  
39 Fly-killing action  
**DOWN**  
1 Peter Pan's creator  
2 Big monkey  
3 Blind strip  
4 Tennis champ Monica  
5 Winter apple  
6 Showy

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- spring bloom  
7 Delany of "Desperate Housewives"  
8 Wind direction (abbr.)  
9 Spills over  
10 Books of Moses  
16 Basketball hoop edge  
18 Makes into lard  
21 Fish eggs  
23 Litter's sire  
24 Fabled dwarf  
25 Enjoyed the slopes  
27 Gratings  
29 Gas or coal  
30 "God's Little —"  
31 Canal boat  
33 — Beta Kappa  
35 Actress Balin



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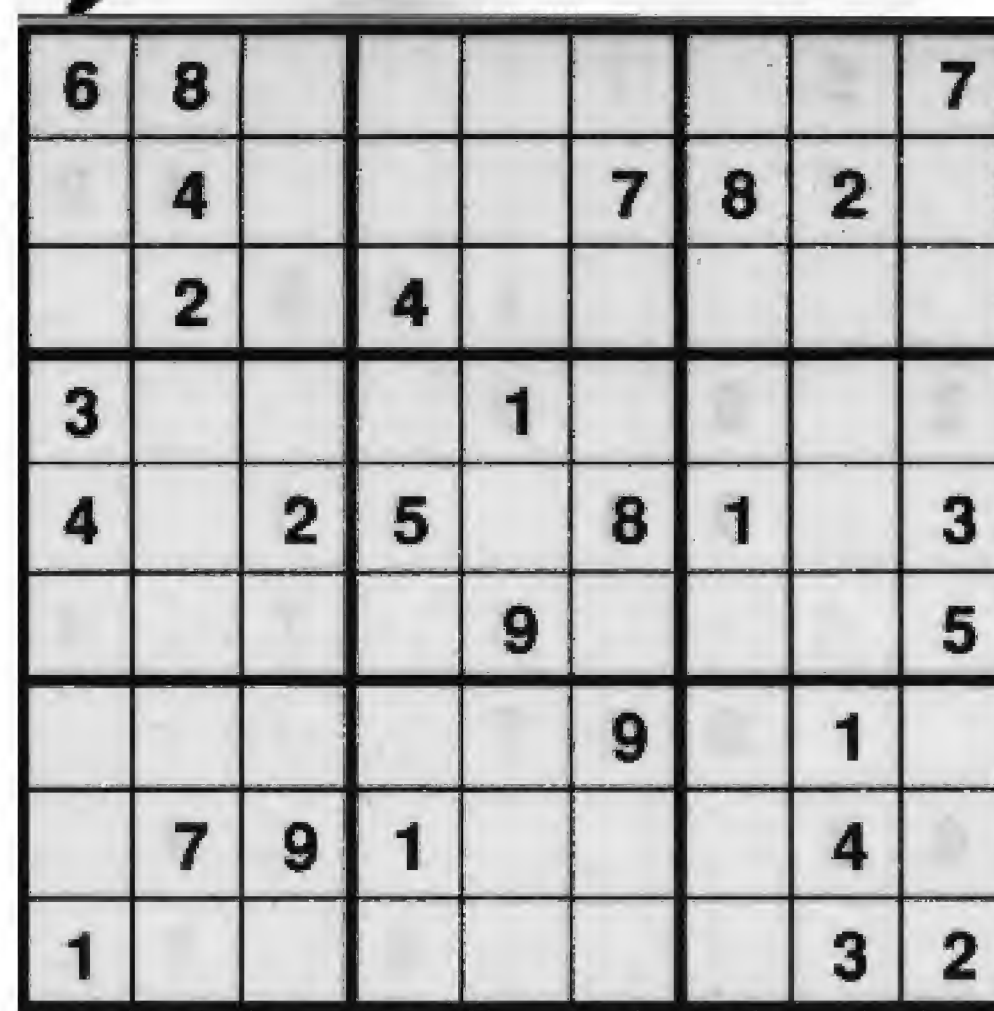
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## Sudoku



## SOLUTION

2	6	8	5	1	9	7	4	3
8	7	9	6	3	4	2	1	5
1	2	4	7	5	6	3	8	9
5	8	2	7	6	9	1	3	4
6	1	3	9	5	2	8	7	4
7	6	9	2	1	4	8	5	3
9	8	1	6	7	3	2	5	4
1	2	8	1	9	9	6	7	6
2	5	7	6	2	8	1	9	9

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9. A number is Never repeated in a row or column. In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9.



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## Pope highlights 'drama' of migrants, refugees

VATICAN CITY (AFP) - Pope Francis highlighted the plight of refugees and migrants in his traditional Angelus prayer, as Catholics celebrated the Feast of the Holy Family on the first Sunday after Christmas.

Using the Holy Family as a comparison, Francis told faithful gathered on the Vatican's St Peter's Square that upon fleeing Egypt, Joseph, Mary and Jesus "experienced the dramatic condition of refugees, marked by fear, uncertainty and difficulties".

Today "millions of families face this same sad reality," said the pontiff, adding that refugees and migrants do not



the way the world treats its elderly people, saying older generations were sometimes like "hidden exiles" treated "like burdens".

Francis, a more moderate pontiff than his predecessor Benedict XVI, has appeared keen for the Church to forge a better relationship with the modern family.

He has called an extraordinary Synod of Bishops in October next year to address among other issues the problem of divorcees remarrying.

A few simple words go a long way in ensuring a happy family, the pope told the crowd: "May I, thank you and sorry", which he made followers in the Square repeat.

The Feast of the Holy Family is celebrated the last Sunday of December.

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Taj Mahal's Tai Choice is a great way to start the meal and be initiated into the joys of Indian cuisine, offering a diverse selection of traditional favorites. It contains hearty portions of Pakoras, crispy vegetarian fritters, Aloo Tikki, potato cutlets, Chicken Tikka, tender chicken breast pieces seasoned just right, and shaped and seasoned ground lamb, charmingly dubbed "Sheik Kebabs." All is served on a bed of sliced onions and brought to your table on a sizzling platter, and you will want to dish those sautéed onions on to one of their tasty Indian breads called Naan, leaving behind not a single crumb.

Main dishes are accompanied by a choice of rice, mixed vegetables rich with garlic, or Naan, plain, buttered, onion or garlic, and you will want to order an extra basket or two of this tasty delight,



on which you can spoon your main course, as well. Poori is crispy fried naan, and most definitely worth the extra two dollars to sample with your meal. Located behind the Royal Plaza Mall, Taj Mahal offers a dining experience that is truly out of the ordinary; they feature an excellent and tasty selection for vegetarians too. If you are a fan of Indian food, or have been toying with trying it, Taj Mahal is the place for a very affordable dining experience and the real deal!

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## 'I'm not anti-Semite,' French footballer Anelka says amid row



PARIS (AFP) - French footballer Nicolas Anelka on Sunday strongly defended a controversial gesture he made during a weekend match, saying "I am neither anti-Semite nor racist", even as British football authorities mulled possible punishment.

The 34-year-old West Bromwich Albion striker and former member of France's national team issued a series of tweets rejecting claims that the gesture he made Saturday was anti-Semitic or a thinly veiled Nazi-like salute, as many have interpreted.

His response came amid growing outrage online and internationally, and a risk that he could face match suspensions if England's Football Association finds his act racially offensive.

Anelka argued in his tweets that the gesture -- in which he thrust his straightened right

arm downwards while tapping his bicep with the other hand -- was merely "anti-establishment".

"I don't know what religion has to do with it. Of course I'm not an anti-Semite or racist and (I) stand by my gesture."

He also called on "people not to be duped by the media" which were "lumping together things and causing an argument without knowing what the gesture really means".

Anelka asserts the gesture was a dedication to a friend, a French comedian named Dieudonne M'Bala M'Bala who has made the salute -- which he calls a "quenelle", meaning a meat or fish dumpling -- his signature.

Dieudonne, as he is widely known, has made overtly anti-Jewish remarks in public for years. He has been fined seven times for defamation, insult and provocation to hate, and

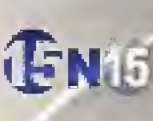

for racial discrimination.

Dieudonne claims his gesture only reflects his anti-establishment views, although it is widely interpreted as a Nazi-style or anti-Semitic action in France.


Anelka himself has marred his career with tantrums and controversial remarks. The footballer converted to Islam in 2004.

The Football Association told AFP Sunday that it would investigate the incident to determine if Anelka should be punished.

He could face a minimum five-ban match under a new anti-discriminatory disciplinary measures introduced in May.

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### Briefs:



LAS VEGAS - One of the most anticipated rematches in UFC history produced an unforgettable ending. A rare, brutal, crazy unforgettable ending. Chris Weidman successfully defended the UFC middleweight title for the first time on Saturday at the MGM Grand Garden Arena by defeating all-time great Anderson Silva a second consecutive time. The result came 1:16 into the second round, when Silva (33-6) threw a left leg kick that Weidman (11-0) checked near his left knee. Immediately, Silva fell to the ground in pain, prompting referee Herb Dean to waive an end to the fight. Replays showed Silva's shinbone snapped from the force of the collision. The official result was a second-round TKO (injury) victory for Weidman. He claimed the 185-pound title in July in a stunning second-round knockout over Silva. The Brazilian icon, widely regarded as the greatest fighter in UFC history, had won 16 consecutive fights before losing his belt to Weidman this summer.



LONDON (AFP) - Chelsea demonstrated their Premier League championship credentials by coming from behind to beat title rivals Liverpool 2-1 in an engaging and keenly contested game at Stamford Bridge on Sunday. Martin Skrtel gave Liverpool a third-minute lead, but Chelsea hit back before half-time through Eden Hazard and Samuel Eto'o to give manager Jose Mourinho victory over his former protege Brendan Rodgers. Having led the league on Christmas Day, Liverpool will finish the year in fifth place, six points below leaders Arsenal, with Chelsea two points off the pace in third place behind Manchester City.



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## NFL: Manning tops voting for Pro Bowl rosters

NEW YORK (AFP) - If Peyton Manning does not lead the Denver Broncos to New York for the Super Bowl, he will instead have a date in Hawaii for the Pro Bowl.

The Denver quarterback was the leading candidate in fan balloting with 1.43 million votes as input from players, coaches and supporters was used to determine a roster of 85 players for the January 26 NFL all-star game at Honolulu's Aloha Stadium.

Players from teams that reach the Super Bowl, set for February 2 at suburban New York in the championship game's first outdoor foray into a cold American city, do not play in the Pro Bowl the week before.

The Pro Bowl revamped its format for the next edition with a draft among the nominees to be conducted January



22 when retired NFL legends Jerry Rice and Deion Sanders will select talent in an alternating choice format with no regard to the American and National Conference teams

typically used in past years.

Manning, 37, has thrown a one-season NFL record 51 touchdown passes during this campaign and was named to his 13th Pro Bowl lineup.

He could set one-season yardage and completion marks and Denver could claim a one-season total scoring mark in Sunday's regular-season finale at Oakland. The Broncos have already clinched a playoff berth and a first-round bye.

Other quarterbacks selected for the Pro Bowl include New England's Tom Brady, New Orleans' Drew Brees, Carolina's Cam Newton, Seattle's Russell Wilson and San Diego's Philip Rivers.

Six running backs in the Pro Bowl lineup include Kansas City's Jamaal Charles, Chicago's Matt Forte, Minnesota's Adrian Peterson, San Francisco's Frank Gore, Seattle's Marshawn Lynch and

Philadelphia's LeSean McCoy.

Eight wide receivers were selected, including NFL reception yardage leader Josh Gordon of Cleveland.

Pittsburgh's Antonio Brown, Dallas' Dez Bryant, Cincinnati's A.J. Green, Houston's Andre Johnson, Chicago's Brandon Marshall, Detroit's Calvin Johnson and Denver's Demaryius Thomas were also chosen.

Detroit's Ndamukong Suh and Baltimore's Haloti Ngata were among the defensive linemen selected while three of the linebackers available are from San Francisco -- Ahmad Brooks, NaVorro Bowman and Patrick Willis.

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## NBA: Bosh leads LeBron-less Heat over Trail Blazers



PORTLAND (AFP) - Chris Bosh scored 37 points, including a last-second 3-pointer for the winning basket, and grabbed 10 rebounds Saturday to lead reigning NBA champion Miami over Portland 103-107.

The Heat were playing without superstar playmaker LeBron James, the reigning NBA Most Valuable Player, who was benched for the night by coach Erik Spoelstra due to nagging right groin and left ankle injuries.

James had not missed a prior game of the season but Bosh stepped up to the challenge of his absence, hitting 15-of-26 shots and going 3-for-3 from 3-point range, making them all from beyond the arc in the last 4:05.

The only other game this year in which Bosh netted more than 30 points was last February at Miami, also against the Trail Blazers.

A showdown of two of the NBA's winningest teams came down to the last seconds after Bosh sank a 3-pointer to give

the Heat a 101-98 edge and followed two LaMarcus Aldridge free throws with a layup for a 103-100 Miami edge.

Aldridge followed with a layup and Portland reclaimed the lead after Miami guard Dwyane Wade fouled Nicolas Batum as he attempted a 3-pointer and the French forward sank all three free throws.

After Wade pulled Miami level with a dunk, it was Ray Allen who was whistled for a foul on Batum, who put the Trail Blazers ahead 107-105 on two free throws with seven seconds remaining, setting the stage for Bosh's decisive 3-pointer with less than a second to play.

Wesley Matthews led Portland, 24-6, with 23 points while Aldridge contributed 22 points and seven rebounds. Robin Lopez had 17 points while Damian Lillard added 16 and Batum finished with 11 points, nine assists, six rebounds and three blocked shots.

## Schumacher suffers 'serious' head injury in ski accident

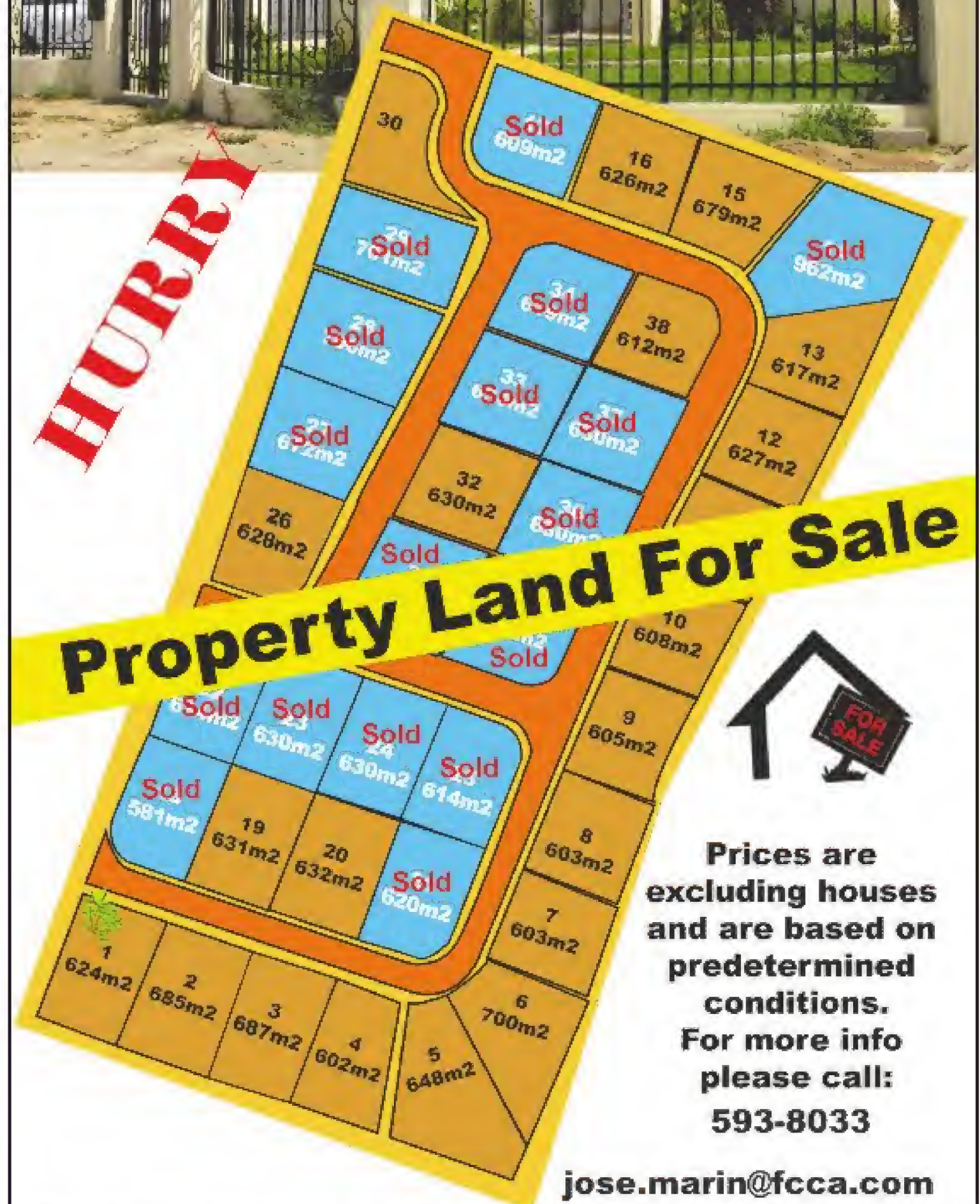


LYON (AFP) - Retired Formula One legend Michael Schumacher is in hospital after suffering a "serious" head injury in France while skiing Sunday, according to the French Alps ski resort he was in and police who gave him first aid. The 44-year-old German was being treated in a hospital in Grenoble, the Meribel resort said, adding that the seven-time F1 world champion's injury was not life-threatening. Schumacher, who won the last of his world titles in 2004, retired from the sport he had towered over since making his debut in Belgium in 1991 after finishing seventh in the 2012 Brazilian Grand Prix.

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## Football: Sunderland's Borini recovering after collapse

CARDIFF (AFP) - Sunderland striker Fabio Borini is recovering after his collapse in Saturday's 2-2 draw at Cardiff, a club spokesman said on Sunday. Borini was substituted at half-time of the match at the Cardiff City Stadium after becoming ill, and reportedly subsequently collapsed in the changing room. Sunderland manager Gus Poyet later revealed Borini, who had been suffering from a virus in the run-up to the game, had been released from hospital, but would not fly back to the north-east with the rest of his team-mates on Saturday night. However, a club spokesman said on Sunday: "Fabio is feeling much better and will return to Wearside today."